

Swinnerton Family History

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The Swinnerton Society

A non-profit making organisation devoted to the research and publication of Swinnerton family records and the welfare of Swynnerton Church.

A member of the Federation of Family History Societies.

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

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Many of you will know that, as well as being the Secretary/Genealogist/Organiser of this Society I am very involved in the world of Family History generally. Through the various jobs I have done, or am still doing, such as President of the Birmingham and Midland Society for Genealogy and Heraldry; Chairman and currently President of the world-wide Federation of Family History Societies; sometime Registrar and now Editor of the Guild of One-Name Studies etc. etc. our name has become very well known in many parts of the world. This has had very beneficial results as whenever people come across it in records, newspapers and the like they invariably and very kindly, copy the reference out and send it to me. It is very rare for me to go to a genealogical gathering without someone coming up to me and handing me a slip of paper or a photocopy of some event relating to our family.

Our PRO, Joe Swinnerton and I happened to be at the same meeting a few weeks ago and he was able to see the system working when I was presented with an extract from some records in Durham!

Over the years these 'miscellaneous snippets' have proved to be very useful and have given me many leads to follow up. This edition of our Journal contains a wide selection from them - both to illustrate to you the wide variety I get and to get them into print instead of just slumbering in my files!

With it goes my very sincere thanks to the very many friends or often totally-unknown people who have been so kind and have gone to the trouble to copy the items out for us.

Do remember, yourselves, to also look out for such nuggets.

THE GOODASSAULTING THE POLICE

Herbert Oakley was charged by PC. Swinerton with being drunk and assaulting PC. Finch.

Witness stated as follows:-

'Yesterday, about 3 o'clock, I was in the Market Sq. and saw Mr Oakley showing off a good deal with a short stick, and all of a sudden he attacked a respectable man. Defendant was drunk at the time and much excited Finch came to my assistance, when defendant struck Finch; the party first assaulted does not appear against defendant.'

PC. Finch deposed:-

'About 3 o'clock yesterday I heard some blows of stick in the Market Square; on arriving at the spot from which the sound proceeded, I saw Oakley striking a man named Tibbat who comes from near Ludlow; defendant grinned at me and struck me on the side of the head twice; he was drunk at the time.

Defendant:-

'No doubt I was drunk, but the person I was fighting with struck me first.

PC. Swinerton - 'I saw the commencement of the assault you struck the first blow.'

To find sureties of £10 each, and himself in £10 to keep the peace for one month.

(Shropshire Conservative, Saturday 1st August 1848)

Sent to me by Mrs Barbara Philpott, an old friend, who has helped us a great deal over the years with help with Shropshire Swinertons. She is an Oakley by descent!

and THE BADPENTONVILLE PRISON

PRO Ref. PCOM 2/78

No. H.1068

Name: Henry Swinerton

Received: 29 Nov 1881

From: Stafford Prison

Date of Discharge: 4 Oct 1882

Whither: Woking

Remarks: Wounding with intent. 7 Years Penal
Servitude. 20 years (? was this his age)
Shoemaker. Stafford Assizes 7 Nov 1881.

(Sent to me by another old friend, Mr David Hawkings who has sent us many extracts from Insurance Policies over the last few years and is now turning his attention to Criminals. He has written a book on Transportation which will be published next year.)

* * * * *

I am amazed at the speed with the case on the previous page was brought to Court - the next day! Most of the cases which come before me are at least 2 months old and often much more.

I do not yet know who the Policeman was, he occurs again in another record but no forename is given. A William Swinerton was a Police Officer in Birmingham a little later but I am not sure if it is the same man. Does anyone claim him - or Henry?

When briefing a newly appointed Ambassador, President de Gaulle said "Don't forget, China is a very large country - full of Chinese." My main impression was that everything in China is on an enormous scale - vast distances, wide rivers, huge cities hemmed in by massive walls, and all the tourist attractions crowded with visitors of every nationality; British, American, Spanish, French, German, Swedish, Italian, Swiss, Japanese - and millions of Chinese coming to see Beijing (as Peking is now called) from as far away as Tibet.

The two and a half hour flight from Hong Kong to Beijing on China Airlines was uneventful and comfortable, with rather more leg-room than one is accustomed to on other airlines. Formalities at Beijing Airport were efficiently handled and we were soon taken in hand by our guide in Beijing, a young man called Wang who spoke fluent idiomatic English and who turned out to be an interesting and informative guide with a nice sense of humour.

Beijing is a disappointing city of some nine millions. Traffic moves slowly down the drab streets for although there are few motorised vehicles by western standards, the wide straight thoroughfares are thronged with untold millions of bicycles all being ridden sedately but precariously and with no appreciation whatsoever of the problems of other road users. No bicycle in any part of China that I visited had so much as a reflector, let alone a lamp, so driving at night was particularly alarming and perilous and the danger exacerbated by the very dim street lighting even along Chang-An Avenue the twenty-five mile long, dead straight equivalent of London's Oxford Street.

In Beijing we were lodged in the Friendship Hotel - a vast establishment with good-sized rooms, gimcrack furniture and ancient plumbing sounding like a section of machine guns. However, like all the hotels I stayed in, it was warm and had a good supply of hot water. The food everywhere was colourless, tasteless and uninteresting - a

far cry from the superb standards to be found in Hong Kong - but it was edible. Surprisingly the tea was like dishwater, but the coffee was good and the waitresses attractive and enchanting.

One party of six - four americans, one dutchman and myself - was conveniently transported by minibus. First, we were taken for the mandatory visit to the zoo to see the rather grubby pandas, then on to the Summer Palace and the Temple of Heaven.

The Summer Palace of the Emperors of China is situated near Beijing on a lake which was still frozen solid in March. One of the features is the 'Long Corridor' - a sort of open-sided covered veranda intricately decorated throughout its half mile length. When I commented that redecorating its elaborate and colourful designs must be like painting the Forth Bridge, a never-ending task, Wang said "Oh! No! It only took a week; we used a thousand painters!" All the monuments we saw were beautifully maintained. The Temple of Heaven in Southern Beijing has a curious circular echoing wall about ten feet high and a hundred yards in diameter. If you stand against the wall you can have a conversation in a normal voice with someone standing in the opposite quadrant.

Next day we were taken to the Ming Tombs and the Great Wall, both of which are about forty-five miles north-west of Beijing. Built between 476 and 221 BC, the six thousand kilometre wall is the only man-made object on earth to be visible from satellites, and a walk along the wide thoroughfare on top of the thirty feet high wall is an unforgettable experience. Our last morning in Beijing was spent in the splendid Forbidden City - the fifteenth century palace of twenty-four Ming and Ching Emperors; finally we joined a half-mile queue in the vast Tian-an-Men Square to file past Mao-Tse-Tung's body which lies in his mausoleum. The fact that such a queue still gathered every day four years after his death in the wintry weather said much about the esteem in which he had been held. As it only took fifteen minutes to reach Mao's wax-like body, the numbers passing daily must run into thousands.

The two and a half hour flight to Xi'an was uneventful and the twenty-mile drive to view the terracotta army was fascinating. This army of some six thousand figures and horses was constructed between 246 and 210 BC by the first Chin emperor who united the whole of China and gave his name to the country. The army was discovered accidentally in 1974 by peasants sinking a well. The soldiers of the army which are slightly larger than life-size are arranged in military formation and sited in a pit measuring 700ft x 200ft a few feet below ground level. Each figure differs in features, dress, expression and pose from all the others. The Army is an astonishing and impressive sight. Xi'an itself is surrounded by a massive wall 14 kilometres long, 40 feet high and a minimum of 40 feet wide at the top. Around the wall is an enormous moat.

The four-hour flight to Kunming in Yunnan Province on the Burma and Viet-Nam borders was by military aircraft and extremely uncomfortable with no leg-room even for short people. Semitropical Kunming is an attractive city, clean and full of flowers and leafy avenues. Both the hotel and the food were the least bad that we experienced - indeed the hotel was quite good. With only one day in the area our delightful, cheerful and enthusiastic young guide ("My name is Wong, but you can call me Fred") took us for a seventy-five mile hair-raising drive to the 'Stone Forest' - a sort of petrified forest which has been so commercialised as to be ruined. The journey through the fields, villages and mountains was however worth the time. Thousands of acres of broad beans and pear trees covered the fertile landscape and the roads were as crowded as ever in China. We stopped at a small village - very basic mud houses with no electric light and no running water or sanitation. Everywhere we went the Chinese inhabitants were friendly, curious, polite and surprisingly often keen to practise their English - the second language in their schools. Although many people were obviously very poor by European standards it seemed that everyone had enough to eat and certainly we saw

no emaciated figures, beggars or people poking around rubbish bins such as one sees even in our own country.

Finally I should mention that all the arrangements for travel, for meeting us, for handling our baggage and for transporting us on the various tours were managed most efficiently, and our three guides were excellent. I will conclude with an extract from my guide book for Kunming:

"The best delicacies in Yunnan cuisine are Elephant Nose braised in Soy Sauce, Stewed Bear's Paw....and three tasty foods wrapped in paper: fried withebaits (sic), fried grasshops (sic) and sparrows with five spices." We certainly saw "Fried Grasshops" for sale!

* * * * *

SWINNERTONS IN THE CIVIL WAR

17th. February 1984.

Dear Sir,

I have recently been given your name and address by Mrs. Tsushima of the Honorable Artillery Company. I am currently researching for a history of the Regiment of Sir Marmaduke Rawdon in the Civil War. As part of the background work I have looked at his business and have discovered that one of his two partners, the other being Edmund Foster, was Robert Swinnerton. This Robert Swinnerton was apprenticed to Rawdon in 1618, at which time his father, John, was said to be deceased. He fought with Rawdon at Faringdon, in 1645 or 46 and was stated in the proceedings of the C.A.M. to have an estate in Tottenham. In 1643 his mother is named as Lady Thomasine Swinnerton? and in 1650 I find a reference to a Sir John Swinnerton, who had fought at Chester. Can you possibly help me to clarify the situation, how are these people related, is there anything more known about 'my' Robert and can I give you any information about Rawdon or his business which may be of use to you?

I look forward to hearing from you and hope that I can be of some help with your society's work.

Yours faithfully,

A.S. Robertshaw

Andrew S. Robertshaw B.A. (Hist)

The Swinnerton Society

22 Feb 1984

Dear Mr. Robertshaw

I was delighted to receive your letter of the 17th. as I always am when I hear from a total stranger about my family! It was very good of you to write and I found your letter most interesting. The people mentioned are well known to me but not this aspect of their activities.

Robert Swinnerton was the 8th child and 5th. son of John Swinnerton and Thomasine nee Buckfold. He was baptised at St. Mary, Aldermanbury on the 21 February 1602 the year in which his father was Sheriff of London. 10 years later, in 1612, John became Sir John when he was elected Lord Mayor - hence Lady Thomasine. Sir John died in 1618. Thomasine married, secondly, John Minn on the 4 Feb 1618/9 at St. James Clerkenwell.

Robert was buried on the 31 Jan 1651 and as far as we know was unmarried and had no issue.

I was not previously aware of his connection with Rawdon or that he had fought in the Civil War.

The Sir John Swinnerton you mentioned is something of a mystery as we have no record of any other Knight at this period. The Lord Mayor's son John died as an infant in 1588. I have to confess, however, that our records of the family's participation in the war are very sparse. Many were Puritans and some were among the second wave of emigrants to America in 1633 before it all started. We do have one record of a Captain Swynnerton, Captain of a Troop of Horse, who was taken prisoner at Oswestry Castle on the 3rd. July 1644 - the castle being then in Colonel Mytton's hands. ~

The estate at Tottenham must be a different one to the one we know which arose when Thomasine, the Lord Mayor's granddaughter, married Sir William Dyer of Tottenham from whom descends Sir Peter Swinnerton Dyer, Master of St. Catherine's Cambridge and lately Vice-Chancellor.

I hope all this is of some help to you. I enclose some photocopies taken from the original history of the family (Pt. II VOL. VII of Collections for a History of Staffs.) but this was published in 1880 and subsequent research has added much to it - for instance, the Lord Mayor is shown as the only child whereas there were actually 8! Stanway Hall is now Colchester Zoo.

We publish a quarterly Family Journal and I would very much like to include this material if you will allow me to do so.

Yours Sincerely
 Sir Swinnerton



The five daughters of the Rev. Henry Ulyate Swinnerton of Cherry Valley, USA. They are Rosamund, Susan, Sylvia, Cornelia and Catherine.



Wedding picture of Albert Edward Swinnerton and Laura Jane Jones of the Wrexham Branch. 1913

These are the Uncles of our member Mr Charles William Swinnerton of Walsall.

He has an old faded sepia copy of the newspaper which was too far gone to reproduce but through the kindness of another family historian, Lt.Col Stanley N. Marker USAF (retd.) I was able to get a much better copy

He visited the Newspaper Library at Colindale for us and, having searched and found the original paper, was able to get a print for us.



THE SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE REGIMENT



THE SHERWOOD FORESTERS (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND DERBYSHIRE REGIMENT)



ROYAL REGIMENT OF ARTILLERY

WALSALL MEN AMONGST BRITAIN'S BRAVE.

SIX FIGHTING BROTHERS.



LCE.-CORPL. CHARLES SWINNERTON,
1st South Staffs. Regt.
(15, Sun-street, Palfrey).



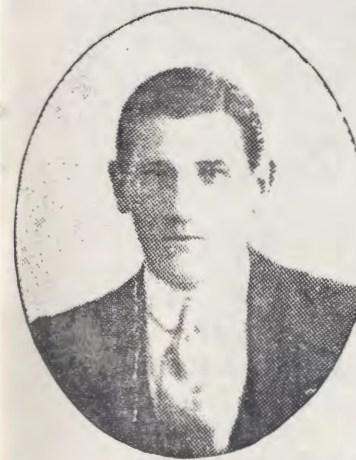
CORPL. ERNEST F. SWINNERTON—
D.C.M.
1st South Staffs. Regt.
(Margaret-street).



PTE. JOHN SAMUEL SWINNERTON,
2nd South Staffs. Regt.
(Navigation-street).



PRIVATE HAROLD SWINNERTON,
Royal Field Artillery
(Margaret-street.)



PRIVATE BERT SWINNERTON,
South Staffs. Regt.
(Margaret-street.)



PRIVATE EDWARD SWINNERTON,
Notts and Derbys.
(Margaret-street.)

ANNIE LOUISA SWYNNERTON - AKA



THE DOMESDAY BOOK

As, by now, you all must be well aware, this year is the 900th Anniversary of that great book but what actually was it?

William of Normandy, variously called William the Bastard, William the Conqueror and King William the First, invaded England in 1066 and defeated King Harold and his Saxons at the Battle of Hastings.

However, it was many years before he succeeded in conquering the whole country (he was still having trouble with the rebellious Staffordshire men in the late 1070s!) but he eventually did and then wished to know precisely what he had gained and how much it was worth.

So, in 1086 he ordered a survey of the whole country to be made, every manor and farm; town and village was to be recorded with full details of who owned it before the Conquest, who owned it now, how many fields there were and their size, how many houses, cottages, ponds, mills, animals etc. etc.

His clerks completed this mammoth task in just 8 months - a very remarkable feat. The results of the survey were then written out in a fair hand, they occupied 800 pages of parchment and were, of course, in Latin - the universal language of the period.

The word 'Domesday' is derived from the Saxon word 'Dom' meaning Judgment and this, together with the Biblical 'Day of Judgment' has led to it sometimes having a different meaning and being spelt 'Doomsday'.

In the next issue we will look at it in more detail and examine the entry for Swynnerton.

HEAR HEAR

J.W.Swinnerton

In our studies of Family History we become so absorbed in compiling written records that we tend to forget that modern technology has given us other media with which to compile our archives. Photography has become commonplace, but we should not forget the newer techniques of video and sound recording. Video recording, with its associated use of a videotape machine, is still sufficiently expensive to be out of reach of maybe the majority of us, but the same does not apply to the sound cassette recorder, which can be purchased for as little as £20 and its associated cassettes are relatively inexpensive.

So why not invest in a cassette recorder to perpetuate the memory of your 'elders' while they are still with you? Now that cassette dimensions and speeds have become standardised, they can be preserved into the foreseeable future, provided always that 'transfers' to new techniques can be made as they supplant today's standard methods. As a parallel development one can cite that in the 1930s it was possible to cut a small 78rpm recording disc which very few record players could reproduce today.

"Have machine, will record" is all very well, but the material needs to be thought out and regulated. Five minutes of Uncle Cecil reciting poetry would give a thorough exposure to his voice but would be incredibly boring, as would be precious seconds wasted by tongue-tied Auntie Flo.

The following are a few points to bear in mind if you are to make the best use of the material available.

- (1) Fix the date and location 'on tape' by mentioning them - a 'Master of Ceremonies' is useful for this purpose, acting as interviewer or commentator, not forgetting the age of the 'subject'.
- (2) Decide beforehand what topics are to be covered. They might include:
 - (a) a comment on current events to set the social scene.
 - (b) a brief description of some aspect of the subject's life and upbringing. "Grandfather remembers" can be fascinating.
 - (c) comparisons of life 'then and now'. These topics should be thoroughly discussed before the actual recording and brought out by means of key questions asked by the interviewer.
- (3) Scripting is to be avoided, as it makes the proceedings artificial. A little hesitancy is natural.
- (4) Humour is not out of place when it occurs naturally and expands the personality of the 'subject', but staged humour is to be avoided.
- (5) Children, especially young children, should not make formal recordings: the occasion will make them 'dry up'. Record them when they are unaware, possibly on a second tape which can then be 'spliced in' and don't forget the date/age tag.

So - start chatting now - just for the record. And if you can afford video recording, so much the better.

OLD DOCUMENTS BY POST.

I know that several members of the family have had letters from a firm called 'Alexanders' recently, offering to sell old documents relating to someone of our name, usually John Swinnerton of Chester.

There is nothing illegal about this, they are a reputable firm who buy old books and documents at auction sales and then seek to dispose of them by combing the telephone directories for someone of the same name.

They are, in my opinion, quite expensive and often the document is a fairly obscure one but it is always worth telling me if you are approached, it might just be an important will, marriage settlement or similar.

* * * * *

SIGNING YOUR NAME

You do this many times and as a matter of course but many of our ancestors could not. It is always interesting, therefore, to see an actual signature when we can.

Mrs Philpott has recently acquired a copy of the will of Edward Oakley of Prees made 21st July 1847 and one of the witnesses who signed was John Swinnerton, the Surgeon of Prees Green who has been mentioned before in these pages. She is sending me a copy so that we can have a record of his signature.

* * * * *

BANK of ENGLAND REGISTERS Society of Genealogists.

SAMUEL SWINNERTON of Colnbrook, Middlesex.
Date of will 27 Sept 1808, proved 21 Oct 1809
(mentions sons Samuel and James)

(ex Eunice Wilson)

WHAT THEY WORE

Jack Swinnerton of Blackpool wrote to say that they had been looking again at the photograph of his grandparents (this Journal Dec.1985.page 95) of which he has the original and a large copy which he made some years ago. The family could not decide whether Walter Clifford Swinnerton (the baby) was, or was not, wearing clogs.

Jack says that, even in his young days, they still did. He remembers, very well, his 'clobber' when he went to Sunday School - a Norfolk Suit, long black stockings, lace-up boots, a straw hat with clip which was fastened to a Mohair string, in turn clipped to his lapel & - to complete the set - a 'Charlie Chaplin walking stick and, of course, an Eton Collar.

When the boots were ready for repairing, he used to have to take them to "Clogger Joe". He would cut the the stitching of the sole. remove the upper from the sole and replace it with a wooden sole, complete with Clog Irons, all for 1/9d.

Previously to his youth, clogs were worn on Sundays also. but really polished so Walter Clifford could be wearing clogs for his photograph, on the original, he says, they certainly look like them.

* * * * *

THE SOCIETY of FRIENDS (Quakers)

Marriages in Britain and Overseas 1859-1880.

23 May 1860 at Ballinderry.

JOHN SWINARTON of Brookhill near Dungannon to Mary Hemington of Trumery near Noira, daughter of the Late Robert Hemmington of Chatteris.

(Found in Durham Record Office and just handed to me at a meeting in Birmingham!)

September 6th is rapidly approaching - just 5 months, 21 weeks or 147 days - whichever way you like to count it - before hundreds of Swinnerton cousins will converge on the village of Swynnerton, that delightful little hamlet in rural Staffordshire.

Some will travel but a short distance, some 100 or 200 miles. Many however will cover great distances from the far flung parts of America, Canada, Australia, the near and far east &c - all with one object in view - to meet together in family friendship and celebrate the 900th year since our family name first appeared in the Domesday Book, and to give a thought to that original founder of our family who lived in the time Of William the Conqueror and settled in Staffordshire, and those descendants from whom we all derive.

Have you made a note of the date in your diary? - if not - DO IT NOW, and tell all your relations. Should you know of any of your family who has not yet become a member of our Society, urge them to join and become eligible to attend this special function.

You will have received with the December issue of the Journal, the leaflet describing and illustrating the Staffordshire Crystal Cut Glass items which are being produced to commemorate this 900th Anniversary.

Orders are coming in steadily from all over the World. The platten to engrave the glass is now ready at the manufacturers, and the special engraving to the purchaser's own choice will shortly be commenced. If you have not yet ordered, please look out the leaflet and order form and send in as soon as possible. Lost the form? - send a S.A.E. to the Secretary.

An error in the size of the Paper Weight occurred on the list. This should read 93mm diameter and NOT 9mm. This was spotted by an eagle eyed lady in the Shetland Isles, who wondered if it was a Commemorative Contact Lens!. Apologies for the error, this typewriter misses a beat occasionally.

The design for the Certificates, which will be presented to those attending the Gathering, is well in hand and it should look good.

To those overseas members who will not be at the Gathering to collect their Commemorative Glass and wish to have orders sent to them by mail, it will be necessary to charge the postage at cost, for it will obviously be more to send a parcel overseas than to a destination in the British Isles.

ALL ORDERS AND ENQUIRIES should be sent to J. E. Swinnerton, 2, Greaves Avenue, Walsall, WS5 3QE. Tele. Walsall 25942.

THOUGHTS ON ANCESTRY

'It is desirable to be well descended, but the glory belongs to our ancestors' Plutarch. circa 46-120.

'Our ancestors are very good kind of folks; but they are the last people I should choose to have a visiting acquaintance with'. Richard Brinsley Sheridan. 1751-1816.

'I can trace my ancestors back to a proto-plasmal, promordial atomic globule. Consequently my family pride is somewhat inconceivable'.

William Schwenck Gilbert. 1936-1911.

FAMILY NOTES

Welcome to the following new members:-

STEPHEN PAIN of [redacted]
[redacted] Mr Pain is an optometrist and is the son of Daphne Elizabeth Pain, nee Swinnerton and a member of the family who are descended from JOHN SWINNERTON who emigrated to Australia from Shropshire about 1878 (see centre pages of the March 1984 issue of this Journal - Vol. Five No.8.) He is a second cousin to our member Marjorie Nightingale.

Mr R.C.Wykes, [redacted]

Mr J.S.Sanders, [redacted]

Mrs M.E.Perks, [redacted]

and [redacted]

Mrs I.Kerry, [redacted]

who are all relatives of our PRO Joe Swinnerton and descendants of the Warwickshire Branch.

Mr Ernest Robert Marryat Yerburgh who is the brother of our member Mrs Prudence Buckle and a descendant of the Oswestry Branch.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Franklin and Veronica Swinnerton to:-
[redacted]

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(The Journal of the Society)

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by the Rev.B.T.Swinnerton

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